



## Unique Food Aid Program Sustains Zimbabwe



Photo: MAPP

A recipient of Title II sorghum in Bulawayo as part of USAID's Food For Peace Program.

During a time when Zimbabwe witnessed soaring inflation and widespread unemployment, with limited access to food, a unique food aid program began working to sustain the urban poor. USAID funded the Market Assistance Pilot Program (MAPP) which provides beneficiaries in Zimbabwe's second largest city, Bulawayo, with a low-cost corn alternative - Title II sorghum.

A group of private voluntary organizations, comprised of Catholic Relief Services (CRS), World Vision and CARE, began the MAPP program in 2003 as the combined effects of drought, poor economic policy, and HIV/AIDS left lives frayed and many communities powerless to fight food insecurity. As an alternative to traditional food distribution, these organizations approached local merchants who could sell the Title II sorghum at reduced rates. Within weeks, 150 retailers in forty Bulawayo suburbs agreed to sell the cereal. Demand exploded from thirty tons to 300 tons a day. Soon, seven local millers were packaging the USAID sorghum to meet the incredible consumer demand.

Program expansion will continue to improve and maintain the nutritional status of Zimbabwe's poor, as well as provide needed food aid to households affected by HIV/AIDS. Mr. Barnett of CRS is confident of the MAPP's suitability and continued success in urban Zimbabwe. According to Barnett, "We are linking at all levels of the community from consumers to small-scale traders to experienced millers, and eventually aim at linking with local producers of sorghum. Because sorghum is also a drought resistant crop, it's better suited to the semi-arid climate than corn."

Success Story

